

NEW HAMPSHIRE CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM
STARTUP GRANT APPLICATION – REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Competition for 2015-2016 School Year

Rolling Deadline for Receipt of Proposals

Direct questions and proposal to:

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PURPOSE OF THE STARTUP GRANT

The purpose of the Charter Schools Program (CSP) is to increase national understanding of the charter school model and to expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the Nation by providing financial assistance for the planning, program design and initial implementation of charter schools; and to evaluate the effects of charter schools. The CSP provides startup funding to eligible entities to support the planning and implementation of charter schools. 20 U.S.C. 771 - Title V, Part B, Subpart 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

In August 2010, the New Hampshire Department of Education received a five-year competitive federal grant for \$10.8 million through July 31, 2015. Last spring, New Hampshire was approved for a one-year, no-cost extension to extend the end of the grant to July 29, 2016. This will allow the Department to fulfill current funding obligations and obligate the remaining federal startup grant funds.

The Department requested an additional, one-year extension to extend the end of the CSP federal startup grant to July 31, 2017.

There are four primary objectives for the New Hampshire's Charter Schools Program (CSP):

- Objective 1: Increase the number of high quality charter schools in New Hampshire, particularly those serving educationally disadvantaged students most at risk in rural and urban settings.
- Objective 2: Use federal CSP grant funds to improve student achievement for secondary charter school students and increase graduation rates.
- Objective 3: Support the dissemination of charter schools best practices to other public schools and LEAs.
- Objective 4: Empower charter schools to become strong independent organizations and support charter school efforts to be fiscally responsible.

In carrying out these objectives, the New Hampshire Charter Schools Program provides sub-grants to qualified charter school developers for the planning phase and beginning years of implementation.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

The New Hampshire Department of Education has approximately \$636,523.62 remaining in charter startup funds for new grant awards. Grant awards typically range from \$450,000 to \$600,000 up to 36 months (3 years) **. The federal Charter Schools Program specifies that not more than 36 months of funding be provided to any one sub-grant, with not more than 24 months (2 years) for implementation.

*** The 36 months is contingent upon the Department receiving approval, from the federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) to extend charter startup funding beyond July 29, 2016.*

There is no assurance that submitting a proposal will result in funding, or funding at the requested amount. Grant awards will be based on proposed location, grade levels served, and proposed enrollment numbers during the first three years of operation.

The planning and program design phase starts once the grant funds are awarded to the applicant. The charter school must open within 18 months of the grant award in order to continue receiving federal funds. No more than 18 months may be used for planning and program design and no more than two (2) years may be used for initial implementation of the charter school.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Charter school developer(s) must have received authorization to establish a public charter school by the New Hampshire State Board of Education.
2. To be eligible to apply for start-up funding, applicants must meet the definition of a charter school. All grant applicants must demonstrate they meet the following federal definition of a “charter school” as outlined in the ESEA (P.L. 107-110, Section 5210(1)).

The term “charter school” means a public school that:

- a. In accordance with a specific State statute authorizing the granting of charters to schools, is exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools, but not from any rules relating to the requirements in paragraphs 1 through 12 of this definition;
- b. Is created by a developer as a public school, or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school, and is operated under public supervision and direction;
- c. Operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school’s developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;
- d. Provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both;
- e. Is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
- f. Does not charge tuition;

- g. Complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
 - h. Is a school to which parents choose to send their children, and that admits students on the basis of a lottery, if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated;
 - i. Agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary schools and secondary schools in the State, unless such requirements are specifically waived for the purpose of this program;
 - j. Meets all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements;
 - k. Operates in accordance with State law; and
 - l. Has a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency in the State that includes a description of how student performance will be measured in charter schools pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school. 20 U.S.C. 7221i(1).
3. In accordance with New Hampshire state law RSA 194-B:1, III, “chartered public school” means an open enrollment public school, operated independent of any school board and managed by a board of trustees. A chartered public school shall operate as a nonprofit secular organization under a charter granted by the New Hampshire State Board of Education and in conformance with RSA 194-B.

Other requirements of a “chartered public school” under New Hampshire state law, RSA 194-B:

- a. Is governed by a board of trustees which *“shall have general supervisory control and authority over the operations of the chartered public school,”* (RSA 194-B:5,I);
- b. No more than one member of the board of trustees may *“simultaneously serve as members of any school board”* and the *“board of trustees shall include no fewer than...2 parents of pupils attending the chartered school...”* (RSA 194-B:5,II);
- c. *“An established charter school shall be a corporation, which shall be registered with the secretary of state after receiving approval under this chapter but before its first day of actual operation, with authority necessary or desirable to carry out its charter program...”* (RSA 194-B:5, III);
- d. Has a governance plan for meetings that conforms to RSA 91-A:2 (RSA 194-B:5, VI);
- e. Has a secular purpose as defined in RSA 194-B:7;
- f. Does not *“discriminate nor violate individual civil rights”* (RSA 194-B:8, I);
- g. Complies with *“all applicable state and federal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations”* (RSA 194-B:8, II);

- h. *Provides for at least the number of days required by state law” and may use “innovative scheduling resulting in at least that number of attendance hours required under RSA 189:1, etc.” (RSA 194-B:8, III);*
- i. *Considers employees of the charter school “public employees for the purpose of collective bargaining” (RSA 194-B:14, I);*
- j. *The teaching staff of the charter school “shall consist of a minimum of 50% of teachers either New Hampshire certified or having at least three (3) years of teaching experience” (RSA 194-B:14, IV).*

LOTTERY AND ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

A lottery is a random selection process by which applicants are admitted to a charter school. 20 U.S.C 7221i(l)(H).

The enrollment policy of a charter school receiving CSP grant funds **must** include a lottery process if more students apply for admission to the charter school than the number of spaces available. All eligible applicants for admission must be included in the lottery process (lottery exemptions below).

Charter schools **must** have an open enrollment period that is advertised within the local/school community so that all interested families may have an equal opportunity to apply for admission. Several (if not all) existing charter schools also advertise their open enrollment period on their school website.

A charter school must recruit in a manner that does not discriminate against students of a particular race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or against students with disabilities. Once a student has been admitted to the charter school through an appropriate process, he/she may remain in attendance through subsequent grades.

A new applicant for admission to the charter school is subject to the lottery if, as of the application closing date, the total number of applicants exceeds the number of spaces available at the charter school. 20 U.S.C. 7221b(b)(3)(I) and 7221i(1)(E), (G), and (H).

For more detailed information, please review the Lottery, Recruitment and Admissions section located in the [January 2014 CSP Nonregulatory Guidance](#).

Lottery Exemptions

A charter school that is oversubscribed must include in that lottery all eligible applicants for admission. Students already admitted to the charter school do not need to reapply. A charter school may exempt, from the lottery, the following categories of applicants:

- Students who are enrolled in a public school at the time it is converted into a public charter school;
- Students who are eligible to attend, and are living in the attendance area of a public school at the time it is converted into a public charter school;

- Siblings of students already admitted to or attending the same charter school;
- Children of a charter school's founders, teachers, and staff (so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of the school's total enrollment); and
- Children of employees in a work-site charter school, (so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of the school's total enrollment).

Weighted Lotteries

New Hampshire does not have approval from the federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) to allow for the use of weighted lotteries; therefore, weighted lotteries are not applicable.

GRANT PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

For each requirement listed below, the applicant must include activities proposed and a timeline for implementation of activities.

1. Evidence that there is a need for a charter school program and that there will be a demand for the school. Please include any data or research that supports the school goals and anticipated success.
2. A three-year budget noting funds requested and activities to be undertaken for each year of each expenditure category.

Expenditure categories: curriculum and instruction, and assessment materials, personnel, technology needs, furniture and equipment, facility readiness, books, supplies and materials, contracted services and professional development activities.

3. Goals and objectives of the charter school, and how the funds requested directly relate to the following:
 - a. Curriculum and instructional goals;
 - b. Effectiveness of evaluating students' educational progress to include the annual statewide assessment program, as provided in RSA 193-C.
 - c. Recruitment of staff members;
 - d. Personnel to be paid by the grant. **Please note:** *Federal charter startup funds may not be used for regular employee salaries/benefits once the school has opened. **Employee salaries/benefits are allowable for three (3) months prior to school opening.***
 - e. Startup needs for assuring that board training occurs as well as professional development for staff members.
4. Anticipated facility plan/timeline and facility readiness costs anticipated, if any.

5. A work plan to include tasks and timelines for activities to be undertaken with startup funds. The work plan will provide structure and benchmarks (dates) for progress and accountability.
6. Coordination with any existing programs, initiatives, school districts, colleges/universities, businesses and/or organizations.
7. Any resourceful revenue streams and/or mutually advantageous relationships or contracts the applicant anticipates with other organizations, etc.
8. Name of the person(s) who will manage the funds and how the Board of Trustees will assure that funding is used as proposed, if grant is awarded.
9. Contact information, background and experience of persons who will be initial members of the Board of Trustees and school leader/principal, if known. **Please provide documentation that Criminal History Record Checks have been initiated within the proposal as an appendix.**

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Charter school applicants **MUST** have submitted a charter application and received approval from the New Hampshire State Board of Education to establish a charter school. ***Please include the official approval letter within the proposal as an appendix.***

Please submit the electronic copy of the entire proposal to:

Email: Michelle.Gauthier@doe.nh.gov

AND

Deliver or submit, via mail, the original plus 3 copies of the proposal to:

**Michelle Gauthier
New Hampshire Department of Education
101 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301**

~ Incomplete applications may not be considered ~

Required Elements

Each applicant must show that the proposal will result in a high-quality educational program. Focus will be placed on the completeness of the work plan/timeline and budget plan..

Proposal Requirements and Format

Please complete and submit the following:

1. **APPENDIX A**
 - Applicant name and contact information

- Summary of Attachments
- Total number of pages including cover sheet
- Signature of applicant and date certifying the packet is complete

2. **APPENDIX B – Cover Sheet**

Proposal Format

- Proposals shall not exceed 20 pages (excluding the appendices).
- Applicants must adhere to the page limitation, but may append limited, relevant materials.
- Use at least a 12-point font size.
- Number all pages.
- Appendix A and Appendix B – Cover Sheet must include original signatures.

Proposal Deadline

There is not a specific deadline date(s) – rolling deadline for RFPs

REVIEW PROCESS

The CSP grant is competitive. The review of proposals will be based on the specific criteria listed in this RFP.

Proposals received are reviewed for completeness, budgetary restrictions and compliance with the formatting requirements by the charter school office.

Each section of the proposal is rated according to the Evaluation Rubric within this RFP by a review panel. The Evaluation Rubric is located in **APPENDIX C** below.

If, in the judgment of the Department, a proposal is late, significantly incomplete, or submitted by an ineligible entity, the proposal may not be accepted. The decision of the Department is final. Applicants submitting proposals that are withdrawn due to incompleteness or ineligibility will be notified in writing.

Applicants will be contacted by the charter school office to discuss any revisions that may be required, i.e., revisions to the budget, work plan.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The following criteria will be considered for each proposal as outlined in the evaluation rubric (a total of 100 points):

- a. Uniqueness and ambitiousness of the proposed school (15)
- b. Commitment to quality in curriculum for the target population including the assessment program for monitoring student achievement (10)
- c. Reasonableness of the financial request in terms of the size and needs of the charter school (10)

- d. Persuasiveness that the funding is truly to establish a successful independent chartered public school (10)
- e. Reasonableness of the budget plan for financial sustainability (15)
- f. Adequacy of the work plan to achieve the objectives on time and within budget, including clearly defined timelines/milestones for accomplishing project tasks (15)
- g. Technical capacity of the Board of Trustees and school leader(s) to assure a well-managed and successful independent public school (10)
- h. School's supports, for example: organizations, community, parents whose support could help the school thrive (15)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **Availability of Funds:** Availability of CSP federal funds is contingent upon the continuation of yearly funding at the federal level. Should federal funding be decreased or eliminated, the Department reserves the right to reduce or conclude funding. Please be aware that continued funding is also subject to satisfactory grant performance of the awarded charter school.
2. The Department shall not be responsible for or pay any costs incurred by the applicant prior to the date the grant is approved.
3. The Department reserves the right to seek clarification of any information contained in a proposal submitted.
4. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted.
5. If the Department chooses to award funds, the successful applicant shall be notified by letter.
6. **Reporting Requirements:** Each eligible applicant receiving a grant must provide feedback to the Department on grant progress and monthly expenditures at regular intervals in an agreed upon format.

In addition, the Department may request other general requirements for any grant proposal. If so, the applicant will be so notified.

APPENDIX A

NHDOE Use Only - RFP Number:		Bureau:	
The applicant must complete the following information below:			
Applicant (Organization) Name:			
Applicant Main Contact	Address	Phone Number	Email Address
Summary of Attachments			
Attachment		Number of Pages	
Total Number of Pages in this Packet Including Coversheet:			
Comments			
<div>I certify that I have reviewed this application and that information given is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.</div> <div>Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____</div>			
NHDOE Official Use Only		Received Date _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete, received by NHDOE by required Deadline: accepted		<input type="checkbox"/> Not received by NHDOE by required Deadline: rejected	
<input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete, returned to Applicant		<input type="checkbox"/> Other_____	
First Reviewer_____		Second Reviewer _____	
Comments:			

APPENDIX B

COVER SHEET

CHARTER SCHOOL START-UP GRANT

(COMPLETE ALL THAT APPLIES)

NAME OF PROPOSED
CHARTER SCHOOL:

PROJECT TITLE:

PROJECT DIRECTOR:

NAME:

TITLE:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

FAX:

E-MAIL:

AMOUNT OF FUNDS REQUESTED:

\$

Certification by Authorized or Institutional Official:

The applicant certifies that to the best of his/her knowledge the information in this application is correct, that the filing of this application has been authorized by the body, group, or institution being represented and that the applicant will comply with the attached statement of assurances.

Typed or Printed Name of Person
Submitting

Title

Signature of Person Submitting

Date

NHDOE: October 2011

APPENDIX C

To be filled out by Reviewer – not by Applicant

NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STARTUP GRANT APPLICATION EVALUATION RUBRIC

Application Requirements: No greater than 20 pages (excluding appendices), font shall be *no less than 12 point*; applicants ***must*** adhere to the **narrative page limitation**, but may append limited, relevant materials. **Requirements are listed in the order they should appear.**

Scoring criteria are:

Name of applicant:							
No.	Requirement						
1.	Rate the uniqueness and ambitiousness of the school.						
Comments:							
Reference Document:			Page(s):		Score	15	Rating
Reference Document						Page(s)	
2.	Rate the commitment to quality in curriculum for the target population including the assessment program for monitoring student achievement.						
Comments:							
Reference Document:			Page(s):		Score	10	Rating
Reference Document						Page(s)	
3.	Rate the reasonableness of the financial request in terms of the size and needs of the charter school.						
Comments:							
Reference Document:			Page(s):		Score	10	Rating
Reference Document						Page(s)	
4.	Rate the persuasiveness that the funding is truly to establish a successful independent chartered public school.						
Comments:							
Reference Document:			Page(s):		Score	10	Rating

APPENDIX C

To be filled out by Reviewer – not by Applicant

Name of applicant:							
No.	Requirement						
5.	Rate the reasonableness of the budget plan for financial sustainability.						
Comments:							
Reference Document:			Page(s):		Score	15	Rating
Reference Document						Page(s)	
6.	Rate the adequacy of the work plan to achieve the objectives on time and within budget, including clearly defined timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.						
Comments:							
Reference Document:			Page(s):		Score	15	Rating
Reference Document						Page(s)	
7.	Rate the technical capacity of the Board of Trustees and school leader(s) to assure a well managed and successful independent public school.						
Comments:							
Reference Document:			Page(s):		Score	10	Rating
Reference Document						Page(s)	
8.	Rate the school's supports, for example: organizations, community, parents whose support could help the school thrive.						
Comments:							
Reference Document:			Page(s):		Score	15	Rating
SCORE TOTAL:							

APPENDIX C

To be filled out by Reviewer – not by Applicant

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Reviewed by:

Date: